

**AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION:**

Please replace the paragraph previously inserted at page 1, line 5 with the following rewritten paragraph:

This is a divisional of co-pending application Serial No. 09/313,123 filed May 17, 2001, now abandoned, which is a divisional of Serial No. 08/673,388, filed June 28, 1996, ~~now issued~~ (US patent U.S. Patent No. 5,958,745 issued September 28, 1999), which is a continuation-in-part of Serial No. 08/628,039, filed April 4, 1996, ~~now issued~~ (US patent U.S. Patent No. 5,942,660 issued August 24, 1999), which is a continuation-in-part of Serial No. 08/614,877, filed March 13, 1996, ~~now issued~~ (US patent U.S. Patent No. 5,959,179 issued September 28, 1999).

Please replace the Abstract with the following Abstract:

--Nucleic acid sequences, vectors, recombinant host cells, transgenic plants, and methods for their preparation are disclosed. The nucleic acid sequences encode threonine deaminase proteins that catalyze the conversion of threonine to  $\alpha$ -ketobutyrate. One or both of the amino acids at positions 447 and 481 of the encoded proteins can be selected from groups of particular amino acids. For example, the amino acid at position 447 can be alanine, isoleucine, valine, phenylalanine, tryptophan, or methionine. The amino acid at position 481 can be alanine, isoleucine, proline, phenylalanine, tryptophan, or methionine.--